

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

IO-11 AID-05 /080 W

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R 080620Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3997

INFO AMEMBASSY MAINILA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 0065

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, ASEAN, CE

SUBJECT: BANDARANAIKE TRAVEL PLANS

REF: MANILA 317, COLOMBO 4026 (NOTAL)

1. EMBASSY IS NOT SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT BANDARANAIKE VISIT TO PHILIPPINES IS OFF, SINCE THERE SEEM TO HAVE ARISEN VARIOUS SCHEDULING AND COORDINATING DIFFICULTIES WITH REGARD TO HER ORIGINAL PLANS TO VISIT BURMA, THAILAND, INDONESIA, MALAYSIA AND PHILIPPINES TOWARDS END OF JANUARY. AS DEPARTMENT AND KUALA LUMPUR ARE AWARE, MALAYSIAN VISIT IS ALSO OFF, PRESUMABLY DUE TO ABSENCE OF ALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER AT ATHAT TIME. FURTHER INDICATION OF SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES IS FACT THAT AS YET NO FIRM DATES HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED HERE FOR ANY OF PROPOSED VISITS.

2. WITH RESPECT TO PHILIPPINE VIEW THAT SRI LANKA AIM IS TO MUSCLE INTO ASEAN (PARA 2, REFTTEL), WE HAVE
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NOT OBSERVED SLIGHTEST GLS INTEREST IN SUCH A STEP,

WHICH WOULD BE SEEN HERE AS TENDING TO TARNISH NON-ALIGNED CREDENTIALS OF COUNTRY WHICH WILL HOST AUGUST 1976 NONALIGNED CONFERENCE. FURTHERMORE, PROJECTION OF ASEAN GRUPING INTO INDIAN OCEAN MIGHT WELL BE CONSIDERED BY BIG NEIGHBOR INDIA AS HAVING A "DESTABILIZING" EFFECT AND COULD UPSET REGIONAL BALANCE, WITHOUT ANY PARTICULAR CORRESPONDING ADVANTAGE EITHER TO SRI LANKA OR TO ASEAN.

3. WITHIN CONTEXT OF HER OFT-PROCLAIMED DOCTRINE OF "ASIAN SOLIDARITY", PM BANDARANAIKE APPEARS TO BE PURSUING EFFORT TO FOSTER GREATER COHESION AMONG ASIANS, AND PARTICULARLY ASIAN MODERATES, WITHIN VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL FORUMS SUCH AS UN AND NONALIGNED BLOC, IN ORDER TO COUNTERACT PRESSURES FROM SUCH ACTIVE AND OFTEN MORE MILITANT GROUPS AS ARABS, AFRICANS, OPEC COUNTRIES. SEEN FROM HERE THIS EFFORT IS PROBABLY OVERLY AMBITIOUS , BUT LOCAL FEELING IS THAT ASIAN INFLUENCE AND PRESTIGE HAVE DECLINED SINCE DAYS OF 1956 BANDUNG CONFERENCE, AND IT IS WORTH TRYING TO RESTORE SOME OF LOST COHESION. ALTHOUGH PHILIPPINES IS NOT MEMBER OF NONALIGNED GROUPING, ANY EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN POSITION OF ASIAN MODERATES WOULD SEEM TO BE IN GOP INTEREST.
VAN HOLLEN

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